



**Prepared Remarks of Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales at the Press Conference
Announcing the Indictment of Outlaws Motorcycle Club Members**

**DETROIT, MICHIGAN
August 15, 2007**

Good afternoon. Also speaking today will be United States Attorney Stephen Murphy, Ronnie Carter, Deputy Director of the ATF and Explosives and Dan Roberts with the FBI.

Yesterday a federal grand jury returned an 18-count indictment against 16 members, associates, and former members of the American Outlaws Association which is commonly known as the Outlaws Motorcycle Club. The indictment was unsealed today and 11 of those defendants are now in custody. We are actively pursuing the rest. Agents of the ATF and FBI also executed search warrants in Detroit and Florida.

The indictment alleges that the defendants committed, attempted, and threatened to commit acts of violence to protect and expand the gang's criminal operations. Several of the defendants are charged with assaulting members of the rival Hells Angels Motorcycle Club.

In addition, several defendants allegedly engaged in the sale of drugs including methamphetamine, marijuana, hashish, and cocaine, while others are charged with offenses related to illegally possessing or selling firearms. Of course, all defendants are presumed innocent under the law until, and unless, convicted.

Today's actions are the result of a five year investigation named "Operation Broken Spoke" involving federal, as well as great partners at the state and local, law enforcement level. These arrests are a part of an ongoing nationwide enforcement initiative targeting this violent gang.

The initiative includes a similar takedown of 15 Outlaws members last month in Boston, and more operations are planned against this gang in the coming months.

According to today's indictment, the Outlaws fund their operations through, among things, acts of violence and drug dealing. Over the past six years, dozens of officers and members of this gang have been arrested and convicted on charges related to drug and gun trafficking, prostitution, and murder.

Indeed, the indictment paints a picture not of a harmless group of motorcycle enthusiasts, but of an international, organized, and violent criminal gang.

One priority of the Department of Justice is easing the grip of fear that gang violence has had on some communities. The effects of violence and gang activity echo far beyond individuals -- beyond a single criminal or a single victim. When a gang declares a neighborhood to be its territory, it is attacking that community and doing damage to the quality of life of everyone living there.

But our efforts to combat violent crime will echo as well. The effects can be felt far from a courtroom or a prison cell. Putting gang members behind bars means good people don't have to install bars on their doors and windows; and parents don't have to fear their children getting caught in the crossfire of a turf war.

Detroit is seeing the results of our partnership with local authorities and our efforts against violent criminals. From May of 2006 to May 2007, this city's northwest police district saw the number of homicides decline 43 percent. Simply put, locking up violent offenders frees communities to nurture their dreams.

In addition to ATF and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan, I would also like to thank representatives of the Justice Department's Gang Squad, the FBI, and the Michigan State Police and the Detroit Police Department who have joined us today. They, and countless other state, local, and federal law enforcement professionals, have done a tremendous job in our national initiative against the Outlaws.

The challenge of gangs and violent crime remain with us, but we are committed to doing make our neighborhoods safer; and I am proud of the law enforcement officers involved in these operations.

I now would like to invite Stephen Murphy to the podium.

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